

Lost and Found: Sovereignties and State Formations in Africa and Asia

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Contextual Introduction

This chapter contributes to and addresses some of the questions related to the colonization of Asia and Africa by European states and the mobilization of the populations of Africa and Asia to end European colonialism.

The notion of *sovereignty* serves as a thread throughout this chapter because it is central to the understanding of colonization and decolonization. Since it is European states that colonized Asia and Africa it is essential that we bring state formation in Europe into the equation because colonization requires a colonizer and the colonized. Colonization also constitutes a loss of sovereignty to the colonized. Thus I emphasize and analyze the processes that informed both the loss and the reclamation of sovereignty in nations across Asia and Africa. I also suggest some answers as to why the memories and issues surrounding colonization and decolonization have not gone away and why they are not likely to go away any time soon.

Although the focus of this chapter is Africa and Asia it is important to first note that the colonization of Asia and Africa by European states were preceded by, and overlapped with, the expropriation of land and colonization of the Americas by the same nations. In fact the link between the colonization of the Americas, Asia and Africa created the world economy, as we know today. For instance the Dutch established Dutch East Indies Company that operated in Asia and Dutch West Indies Company that operated in Africa and the Americas in the chattel slavery enterprise. The economics activities of each one complemented the other. For example, African captives were forcibly transported to the Americas to work under coercion in order to extract minerals such as gold and silver, and produce goods such as cotton, sugar, coffee and tobacco, for European consumption, as well as to facilitate European trade with Asia. Thus it is important to remember that while this paper focuses primarily on Africa, the Americas and Asia, Europe remained a pivotal fulcrum in all the activities (Nimako and Willemsen 2011).

The revolts of the Americas and establishments of independent states, first, the United States (1776), then, Haiti (1804), and later the rest of Latin America, were followed by the intensification to the control of Asian trade and the imperialist

Scramble for Africa. Textbook knowledge attributes the subjugation of the Americas to the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the Americas in 1492. From the vantage of the emergence of a world economy this was eventful but I have argued elsewhere that navigation does not necessarily lead to colonization. This is all the more so since humans have been navigating and travelling from time immemorial (Nimako 2011).

The colonization of the Americas by some European states, and the use of 'race' as the organizing principle of the enslavement of Africans to extract wealth from the Americas to Europe, strengthened European states; this in turn made it feasible for some of the European states to colonize much of Asia, and Africa. The forces that gave rise to the European colonial enterprise/project revolved around state formation in Europe, so was the process of decolonization in Africa and Asia. Bearing this in mind, the chapter also sheds light on why colonization of Asia and Africa took place in the nineteenth century (first in Asia and then in Africa) and why decolonization took place in the second half of the twentieth century (first in Asia, and then in Africa).

Not only was the colonization of the Americas qualitatively different from that of Asia but also, qualitatively, the colonization of Asia and Africa were different. In Asia the European states inserted themselves in existing trade networks and took them over but their capacity to significantly expropriate land and totally control populations and cultures was less successful. In Africa existing trade networks, such as the Trans-Sahara route, had been interrupted during the Atlantic 'slave trade' and slavery between the sixteenth and the nineteenth century; some lands were expropriated in the southern part of Africa and new trade routes through the Atlantic and Europe were created. We shall return to this below.

I use the concept of sovereignty in three ways, namely, territorial, citizenship and 'international law'. First, territorial sovereignty is used as an instrument to delineate the boundaries of nations and states. This became more pronounced in Europe after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and laid the institutional foundations for the inter-state system around which European states built a world order, and the very one under which we currently live in the 21st century. As will be elaborated below the Peace of Westphalia provided the signatories a framework for coordinated competition and cooperation and an institutional framework of reciprocity. It also provided a 'legal' mechanism under which they competed for trade and waged wars; thus it regulated both trade and war at the same time; it also facilitated state monopoly of violence. But then, as now, reciprocity was not extended to other peoples; it applied only to the signatories. Common to the signatories is their *non-recognition* of the sovereignty of the peoples of Americas, Africa and Asia. In some cases European states recognized each other's land expropriation; in others they did not recognize and fought for control, symbolized by the raising of their national flags on other peoples territories (Nimako and Willemsen, *ibid*).

Second, I use the concept of sovereignty in relation to citizenship; this is tied to the French revolution (Wallerstein 2004). As a consequence of the French Revolution (1789) first, in France, and later in other European countries, citizenship in Europe was elevated to the level of sovereignty; citizens were considered sovereign in relation to rulers and government. Sovereign citizenship undermined the authority of European monarchs but did not change the direction of European colonial ambitions. On the one hand sovereign citizenship increased freedom and so trade unions and affiliated political parties emerged; so were universal voting rights for men, and later for women. On the other hand citizens shared in the booty of colonial enterprise as entrepreneurs, soldiers, police, lawyers, civil servants and academics and justified colonial projects. Flowing from this not only did the notion of European expansion and discoveries emerge as part of academic narrative to justify colonialism but also the narrative gave the false impression that peoples of the world did not know the existence of each other until European navigators brought them together in the sixteenth century (Nimako 2011; Araujo and Maeso 2015).

Thirdly, the concept of sovereignty is used in the context of 'international law'; in particular within the United Nations framework. The United Nations inherited colonies through the Trusteeship arrangement under its precursor, the League of Nations; this obliged the UN to ponder on colonialism and decolonization and made the United Nations a benevolent imperialist. The Second World War weakened European colonial powers and strengthened the United States of America and nationalist movements in Asia and Africa. The United Nations emerged out of these constellations and gave rise to the notion of a self-determination framework; it implied decolonization could be regulated and could also involve those nations who were not directly involved in the colonial project and enterprise. In other words decolonization became an international issue but not just between the colonizer and the colonized. And whereas the colonization of the Americas strengthened European states' ability to colonize Asia and Africa, the Second World War weakened European states and strengthened national liberation movements in Asia and Africa (Amin et al 1990).

These three forms of sovereignties are essential to understanding this chapter whose central thesis is that wherever there is domination, one should expect resistance; colonization (domination) and decolonization (resistance) is no exception. People have resisted the encroachment on their territories and persons from time immemorial and colonization was also resisted; and the outcome of the resistance was decolonization, which in turn requires a new vision of the world. The loss and the reclaim of sovereignties constitute a contestation of sovereignties from without, that is foreign aggression and occupation; nationalist movements emerged out of the desire to reclaim sovereignty. From within, power struggle; political parties emerged out of the need of groups to deprive the nationalist movement leaders from obtaining absolute power in the post-colonial setting. But the external-internal politics dichotomy is not clear-cut because imperial powers insert themselves in local politics in Africa and Asia.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the process of colonization and the progressive control of such colonies, followed by an analysis of decolonization in the second part. Hopefully the sequence of analysis would also shed some light on the relationship between nationalism, nationalist movements and political parties in state formations in Africa and Asia.

On Afro-Eurasia and the European Colonial Enterprise

The landmass that constitutes Afro-Eurasia connects Africa, Asia and Europe and it was there that trade links were extended back for millennia. Within the Afro-Eurasian 'world' economy, Africa was an important producer of gold the bulk of which was from West Africa; other supplies of gold came from Nubia, which exported gold via Egypt to Constantinople/Istanbul and from Ethiopia to Egypt, the Red Sea, and India. Another source was 'Zimbabwe, which for a millennium had been an important sources of gold for the world, reached its peak production of one ton during the fifteenth century' (Frank 1998: 149-150).

Both Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama wanted to find an alternative route to Asia partly because Asia was then, as it is now, 'the world factory'; Asian production, competitiveness and trade dominated the world economy. China produced and exported silk, ceramics, some gold, copper, and later tea. India produced and exported cotton and silk textiles. After Columbus and Vasco da Gama led the way, the Portuguese and the Dutch, and later England and France, stepped up their involvement in East Asia, seeking a role in the trade between China and other Asian countries. By the end of the sixteenth century the Afro-Eurasia landmass had been delineated; and the politics underlying the trade links were becoming separate from the geography. Europe had turned to the West in order to reach the East and the idea of Euro-America or the Western world was born out of this constellation (Arrighi 1990)).

At the broader world level 'the incorporation into this Old [Afro-Eurasia] World economy of the New [Atlantic] World in the Americas and their contribution to the world's stocks and flows of money certainly gave economic activity and trade a new boost from the sixteenth century onward' (Frank 1998: 56). This released demographic pressures on Europe through emigration to the Americas; it also released pressure on European lands because Europeans expropriated the lands of the native populations of the Americas. This de facto made the Americas an extension of the European world; thus for more than two hundred years the Americas served as the farms and mines for Europe. And the entire process made race and racism an organizing principle of slavery and called into being an international division of labor, shaped primarily by western politics, in which enslaved Africans were forced to occupy the lowest level. In other words the geopolitics that emerged from this gave Europe the appearance that it no longer formed part of an Asian peninsula. This is the appearance that it retains today.

We have argued elsewhere that trade does not necessarily lead to colonization. It is the persistence search for gold by leaders from some European countries to trade with Asia, and the political structures and alliances, especially the Peace of Westphalia (1648), that underpinned it, that made the emergence of a world order decisive. There were several important and overlapping economic activities that emerged. Minerals acquired in the Americas through the use of enslaved African labor, including silver and gold, were traded in Asia. For example, the Spanish Galleon trade directly linked the Spanish Caribbean with the Philippines. European traders also brought extensive crops from across the Americas to Europe. And some of these crops – such as maize and tobacco - were also sent to China (Frank *ibid*). In other words the addition of the Americas to the Afro-Eurasia trade networks expanded, strengthened and enriched European states (Nimako 2011).

Much of these trade activities were mediated through Chartered Companies based in European states; and various European states had their own versions of the East India Company. Prominent among these Chartered Companies were the British East India Company and the Dutch East India Company. Chartered Companies were granted monopoly by their states and were allowed to sign agreements with foreign rulers and form their armies to facilitate their ‘trading’ projects. Many of the treaties were dubious and gave Europeans states the status of protectors of native rulers, also known as protectorates and the ‘protectorates’ served as springboards for European states to compete effectively with Asia, and later colonize it, followed by the colonization of Africa. The colonization of the Americas, Asia and Africa gave rise to a world order under European control, a political construct that emerged after the Peace of Westphalia (1648), signed between states that now form part of Germany, Spain, France, Sweden and the Netherlands (Nimako and Willemsen 2011).

Textbook knowledge informs us that the Peace of Westphalia resolved the 30 years religious wars among Christians ruled from Roman Catholic Rome; this in turn gave rise to religious states, namely, Protestant-led monarchs and states in the northern part of Europe and Catholic-led monarchs and states and the southern part of Europe (Nimako and Willemsen *ibid*). We take this a step further because the Treaty of Westphalia did more than resolving religious conflict. It provided the modalities for the signatories to compete and cooperate; but it also delineated the limits of recognition of the territorial integrity of the states of the signatories by preventing one from swallowing the other. This was one side of the sovereignty coin from European perspective.

The other side of the coin is that the Peace of Westphalia territorial sovereignty arrangement went hand in hand with the *non-recognition* of the territorial sovereignties of other peoples in the Americas, Asia and Africa. In other words the territorial sovereignties and integrity of the peoples of the Americas, Africa and Asia were *not recognized* and trampled upon by European states. In practical terms this meant that European states could occupy the territories of people deemed non-

Europeans in the Americas, Asia and Africa and claim it, with or without the consent of the natives, by raising a national flag of a European state on the territory.

Important to note is that even if contemporary division of labour in the academia fail to observe the link between the Afro-Eurasia and the Americas in their analysis the European rulers who had colonial ambitions were conscious of the fact that there was a link between developments in Africa, the Americas and Asia. This is all the more so since in 1751 the British Board of Trade ordered the governor of Cape Castle (on the coast of present Ghana) to stop cotton cultivation among the Fante people, because:

The introduction of culture and industry among the Negroes [i.e. Africans] is contrary to the known established policy of this country [i.e. Britain], there is no saying where this might stop, and that it might extend to tobacco, sugar and every other commodity which we now take from our [Caribbean and American slave] colonies and thereby the Africans, *who now support themselves by wars*, would become planters and their slaves be employed in the culture of these articles in Africa, which they are employed in America. (Boahen 1966: 113 quoted in Nimako and Willemsen *ibid*: 57; emphasis added)

The above quote illustrates that there was a conscious and deliberate effort to interrupt the production and economies of Africa and encourage wars in favor of kidnapping Africans and transporting them to the Americas for enslavement. In other words Africans had to be restrained from using their labor productively in Africa so it could be used as enslaved African labor in the Americas. This quotation also indicates that there was no *laissez faire* or *free trade* in the way we have been made to understand in economics textbooks. Thus the epistemology of *laissez faire* is misleading and the underlying thesis is false because the world economy, as we know now was built neither on free trade nor free labor.

The links between Africa, the Americas and Asia can also be illustrated by considering the ways in which various European states responded to the revolts of the subjugated populations of the Americas to direct European rule. After the British colony in North America revolted and established an independent state of the United States of America (USA) in 1776, Britain intensified its trade activities in Asia. Thus not only did the British state take the lead to curtail some of the activities of the British East India Company at the end of the eighteenth century but also when the first consignments of sugar from Bengal started to arrive in Britain in 1793, Mr. Randle Jackson, Director of the East India Company, informed his shareholders that:

'It seemed as if Providence, it took from us America, who should say that Providence had not taken from us one member, more seriously to impress us with the value of another?' (James 1980: 52).

Less than two decades later, on 5th May 1812, Mr. Jackson informed his shareholders that: “We need to invest in conquest before we can reap the advantages in revenue and trade” (Roger Houghton, see www.houghton.hk)

After suffering several defeats in Canada and Haiti in the eighteenth century, France intensified its activities in Asia in what it then called Indo-China; and as if that was not enough, France, under the leadership of Napoleon, turned its attention to Europe in an attempt to prevent Britain from trading in continental Europe. Napoleon was not only defeated [in 1815] but also France became bankrupt and led to the sale of its territorial control in North America, known as the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. The aftermath of the Napoleonic wars (1799-1815) led to the reconstitution of boundaries in Europe (Wallerstein 1990); this found its expression in the Congress of Vienna (1815); it also led to European imperialism towards Asia and Africa.

The Europeans were more successful in expropriating land in the Americas than in Asia; as mentioned above, in Asia the Europeans inserted themselves in existing trade networks (Frank 1998). By the turn of the nineteenth century not only did revolts in Asia against European operatives make it difficult for the European chartered companies to operate profitably but also the end of the Napoleonic wars gave rise to reconstitution of boundaries, first in Europe and later Africa and Asia. In practice this implied the replacement of the chartered monopoly companies by the state and granting European citizens of all classes and gender more access to the colonial booty. For instance when the Dutch regained its territorial sovereignty from France [in 1815] in line with the transformation of the federal Dutch Republic into a unitary nation-state the Dutch formally moved to colonize Indonesia. According to Legene and Waaldijk, in Indonesia the Dutch:

Simultaneously ... introduced *forced labour* and large-scale exploitation of natural resources. After the 1860s, *free enterprise* was allowed in, and a growing number of colonial entrepreneurs and officials with their families settled in Indonesia (Legene and Waaldijk 2007: 189; emphasis added).

The reader should take note of our emphasis on the words *forced labour* and *free enterprise* because it reminds us that as Europeans increasingly gained more freedom as sovereign citizens to join the colonial enterprise the colonized peoples in Asia and Africa increasingly lost their territorial sovereignty and collective freedom.

According to Legene and Waaldijk,

It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that the Dutch introduced a more intensive and ‘enlightened’ mode of colonial rule, which they named the ‘Ethical Policy’. It sought to achieve political commitment to the colonial system among the Dutch and the Indonesia population. On both sides of colonial rule, ever more people had to participate in the

implementation of colonial rule, under the guidance of an elite of politicians and administrators (Legene and Waaldijk ibid: 189)

There you have it.

Just as the colonization of the Americas facilitated Europe to trade with Asia, so the colonization of the Indian sub-continent facilitated British aggression towards China. Britain recruited Indians to fight in China on behalf of Britain in the so-called Anglo-Chinese Wars (also referred to as Opium Wars in textbooks) between 1839 through 1842 and ended with the Treaty of Nanking; another war involving France and the United States on one side and the people of China on other took place between 1856 through 1860 and ended with Treaty of Tientsin. This was followed by the implosion of China through the Taiping Rebellion (1850-64) led by the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom movement. Recall that the peoples of China were defending their territorial sovereignty from foreign encroachment and the failure led to classification of the nineteenth century in Chinese historiography as the century of humiliation (Sachs 1990). By the turn of the twentieth century the Chinese state had been weakened and after the First World War civil war broke out, followed by the occupation of Japan of the eastern part of the country.

Within Europe, as a consequence of the Napoleonic wars and reconstitution of European territories and boundaries Belgium emerged as an independent country in 1830 (Mommen 1982). As a latecomer to colonialist intrusions, the Belgium elite went to look for a king and found one in Germany in the person of King Leopold. To count as a relevant king in Europe at the time King Leopold II went to look for a colony and after studying the world map and trying in vain to find a colony in the Americas and the Pacific, he spotted a location in Africa called the Congo that was not yet contested by European states. And as if that was not enough King Leopold II of Belgium was able to appeal to his European cousins for part of the colonial booty. Among other things he formulated his colonial ambitions and strategies in the following words:

I'm sure if I quite openly charge [Henry Morton] Stanley [the explorer] with the task of taking possession in my name of some part of Africa, the English will stop me. If I ask their advice, they'll stop me just the same. So I think I will just give Stanley some job of exploration which would offend no one [i.e. European rulers], and will give us the bases and headquarters which we can take over later on". He went on to say that: "I do not want to risk ... losing a fine chance to secure for ourselves a slice of this magnificent African cake" (Hochschild 2006: 58)

The magnificent African cake he spoke of is the country now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo. After persuading the British, the French and Americans to give him a role in Africa, he persuaded Germany to organize a conference to implement it. The conference is now recorded in history textbooks as

The Berlin Conference 1884/85 or the Scramble for Africa; and a magnificent cake he got.

The Berlin Conference took place against the background of spheres of influences occasioned by more than two hundred years human hunting for enslavement in Africa by Europeans. What the Berlin Conference achieved was to translate the notion of spheres of influence into 'effective occupation' (Araujo and Maeso 2014: 154-177). The occupation did not follow the logic of nationhood in Africa; but it had its own logic, namely, occupation, expropriation, appropriation, and justification. First, colonialism is not only about the occupation of foreign lands. It required the construction of a state to manage the land and control of the colonized. Recall that European citizens had claimed to be sovereign and thus independent since the nineteenth century. But this did not prevent the active mobilization of the citizens in the colonial enterprise. European citizens joined the colonial enterprise as entrepreneurs, soldiers, civil servants, police, academics, and missionaries. The colonial state became the extension of European sovereignty and epistemologies emerged to justify them; the territories acquired were branded as British India, Indo-China, British Africa, French Africa, Belgium Congo, and Portuguese Africa.

Second, the colonial state became a reconstitution and re-construction of African and Asian borders; different ethnic borders were brought under one colonial territorial and administrative roof and referred to the peoples as natives; and there were specific laws for the natives. The management of the colonies had its own logic. The world is more familiar to South African Apartheid laws such as Group Areas Act, the Separate Amenities Act, the Immorality Act, and the Population Registration Act than other colonial administrations; but their variants existed elsewhere.

Citizenship, trade unions, political parties and voting rights for both men and women did not exist in colonial project. (Nimako 1991; Mamdani 1999)

Recall that during the Atlantic slavery the enslaved chopped, planted, picked or harvested, carried, cooked, served, washed and cleaned, so that the enslavers on the plantations could pursue their non-menial activities – reading, writing, sport, and so on (Nimako and Willemsen 2011: 52). After the legal abolition of Atlantic slavery Asians (from India, Indonesia to China) were recruited as indentured laborers to work in the Americas to compensate for the loss of enslaved African labor. After the colonization of Asia and Africa colonial subjects from the Indian sub-continent were sent to South Africa to work as indentured laborers on sugar cane fields; they were also sent to various African countries to construct railways; Africans were also recruited as soldiers to fight in Asia and Europe for the colonizers. The division of labor during slavery and colonial period remained racialized and in Malaysia the colonial authorities were proud to justify this practice in the following words:

The function of the white man in a tropical country is not to labour with his hands, but to direct and control a plentiful and efficient supply of native labour, to assist in the Government of the country, or to engage in opportunities offered for trade and commerce, from an office desk in a bank or mercantile firm (British Malaya, May 1926, quoted in Amin and Caldwell 1977: 5).

Third, native rulers did not only become colonial subjects, they became instruments of colonial rule and control, also known as indirect rule. The native rulers were held hostage by the colonizer on the principle of 'when persuasion fails, force must apply'. It implied that native rulers who did not subscribe to the indirect rule principle were overthrown in favour of rival groups prepared to play second fiddle to the colonizer. But resistance continued and there were numerous revolts against colonial rule: some of the revolts revolved around specific laws, forced labor, imposition of taxes, land expropriation, and identification pass.

There are too many examples that can be quoted to illustrate forced labour and revolts. Not only did the British give new names to the territories they occupied but also they convinced themselves that the territories belonged to them. But for the sake of lack of space let us take one example from Malaysia:

It should be made clear that the Authorities will not tolerate anything that savours of organized agitation. This is British territory, and the men concerned in the strikes are aliens. They [i.e. the indentured laborers from India] come here because the inducements held out appeared good to them, and once here they have to conduct themselves with the circumspection expected of any alien in a foreign country (Malaya Tribune, September 21, 1936, quoted in Amin and Caldwell 1977:5)

Clearly this is a world upside down; the British did not consider themselves as aliens in foreign lands; but others.

To conclude this section, as European states and their citizens emerged from Napoleonic wars and gained more freedoms and rights, especially the so-called working class, women and children, they joined the colonial enterprise to take away the freedoms and rights of Africans and Asians by convincing themselves that they were on a civilizing mission for the progress of mankind (and why not womankind?). But unlike the Americas, the European colonizers went to bite more than they could chew in Asia and Africa. Unlike Africa, the colonization of Asia was not authorized at a European conference. Fifteen years after the Berlin Conference a group of people of African descent organized a Pan-African Conference to challenge the outcome of the Berlin Conference. The communiqué of the Pan-African conference, titled 'Address to the Nations of the World', included the following words by W.E.B Dubois:

The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour-line – the relation of the darker to the lighter races of the men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea (Dubois 1903)

Five times in the first half of the 20th century Pan-African conferences took place in major European cities, and in New York, between 1900 and 1945. The focus of the Fifth Pan-African Conference in Manchester in 1945 was devoted to the decolonization of Africa. In other words the end of the First World War meant the end of the

offensive phase of imperialism and the beginning of the defensive phase of imperialism.

On Decolonization: From Offensive to Defensive Imperialism

The European colonial enterprise was a violent and oppressive system with an offensive and defensive component (Nimako 1991). The 19th century was the offensive phase of imperialism and involved the signing of dubious treaties with native rulers, waging wars, plundering, occupying foreign lands and the justification of such activities at home as 'civilizing mission', also referred to as the White man's burden (Davidson 1992). Colonialism also constituted an extension of European civil wars. Thus unlike previous European civil wars, by the turn of the twentieth century European civil wars had become a world war since European states could draw their colonial territories/subjects to join their wars.

All nationalist movements in Africa and Asia emerged to reclaim territorial sovereignty and this put the European colonizers on defense at the turn of the twentieth century; hence defensive imperialism. The essence of defensive imperialism is that it adopts a mechanism of progressive control, a dynamic process that continuously moves to newer forms of control in responses to resistances and revolts of colonial subjects (Nimako and Willemsen 2011). The colonizers controlled the colonized not only through violence but also through the institution of colonial education system for its labor needs; academics, media, novelists and missionaries emerged among the colonizers to produce knowledge and discourse for the justification of colonialism. By the second half of the twentieth century the colonial project had produced urban workers and unemployed, teachers, priests and professionals in the colonial territories. It appears contradictory but it was those who were born under colonial rule and trained to support colonial domination who used the *memory of colonial occupation* to revolt against colonial rule and mobilized for decolonization. This is all the more so since the leaders who led the efforts to regain territorial sovereignty in the twentieth century were not the same native rulers who lost it to European states in the nineteenth century

Fast forward, the Second World War weakened European states and strengthened the United States of America and nationalist movements in Asia and Africa and it was out of this constellation that the United Nations emerged (Schlessinger 2003). The UN became an organ of international legal framework through which territorial sovereignty could be re-claimed by colonial subjects. But nationalist claims for territorial sovereignty were usually met with violence by the colonial authorities. From Indonesia, India, Vietnam through Algeria, Madagascar, Ghana, Kenya, Cameroon to Zimbabwe, Angola, Guinea Bissau, South West Africa and South Africa, legitimate nationalist claims were met with intimidation, arrests and imprisonment, violence and in some cases the assassination of its leaders by the colonizers.

To illustrate the impact of the Second World War on decolonization let us start from the Dutch controlled Indonesia. During the Second World War, not only was the Netherlands occupied by Nazi Germany but also Japan occupied the Dutch colony of Indonesia, pulled the rug from under Dutch colonial feet and held Dutch colonial authorities war prisoners. When the US forced Japan to capitulate in 1945 and ended the Second World War in that part of the world, the Indonesian nationalists, led by Sukarno, declared Indonesia an independent nation in August 17, 1945; but the Dutch state that emerged after the Nazi occupation in Europe contested the claim of sovereignty by Indonesian nationalists in Asia, and war broke out between the Indonesian nationalists and the Dutch. But the Dutch did not succeed in returning to the colonial status quo partly because Indonesia had the United Nations on its side and Indonesia became an independent nation under UN recognition in December 27, 1949.

After Indonesia led the way in the context of UN sovereignty arrangements, India followed in 1948; but Indian nationalists could not hold on to the colonial boundaries the British constructed; 'British India' disintegrated into three countries, namely, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh; so was Malaya, which became Malaysia and Singapore. Like Indonesia, the eastern part of China was occupied by Japan amid civil war before and during the Second World War. In 1949 after more than a decade of struggle, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, the People's Liberation Army emerged victorious out of the civil war and the Communist Party of China gained control of China; and the People's Republic of China was proclaimed (Arrighi 1990; Frank and Fuentes 1990).

Like Indonesia and China, Korea was also occupied by Japan.

In 1945 the Korean people regained their independence from Japan, only to have their country cut in half by foreign intervention. In 1950 a civil war broke out only to be internationalized and conducted (under the flag of the 'United Nations') with all the brutality that would later accompany American aggression in Vietnam – but without any of the publicity or protest. (McCormack and Gittings 1977: 7).

After defeating the French at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954 followed by the Geneva Accords in the same year to make Vietnam an independent nation within the UN framework. But the United States would not let Vietnam go. This led to a division of Vietnam between North and South. The now famous Vietnam War ended in 1975 and, unlike Korea, broke down the north-south divide.

Unlike Asia, decolonization of Africa has to be placed in the context of Pan-Africanism. Like Indonesia in Asia, Ghana led the way in Africa; Ghana became the first country in Africa to achieve political independence *through conscious mass mobilization* within the United Nations self-determination framework.

As noted above the focus of the Fifth Pan-African Conference in Manchester (UK) in 1945 was the decolonization of Africa; by that time Kwame Nkrumah had relocated from the US to England, and was one of the organizers of the conference. When he returned to Ghana in December 1947 he was engaged in the difficult process of decolonizing the country politically, culturally, and economically. This is all the more so since the colonizers sold the anti-colonial movements to their populations as fight against communism. In other words the 'civilizing mission' in the offensive phase of imperialism became 'anti-communism mission' in the defensive phase of imperialism; and it was designed to pave the way for the colonizer to use violence to contain nationalist movements. An example of this was the Watson Commission, instituted by the British government to investigate 'disturbances' in Ghana in 1948, three months after the arrival of Nkrumah in Ghana. Not only was Nkrumah and others arrested by the colonial authorities as a consequence of the 'disturbances' but also the Watson Commission noted in its report that, Nkrumah:

Appears while in Britain to have had Communist affiliations and to have become imbued with a Communist ideology which only political expediency has blurred. In London he was identified particularly with the West African National Secretariat, a body which still exists. It appears to be the precursor of a Union of West African Soviet Socialist Republics. (Watson Commission 1948, quoted in Nimako 1991: 46)

To counter colonial misinformation, at a rally in the north of the country on 5 March 1949 Nkrumah stated:

This country is ours. This land is ours. It belongs to our chiefs and people. It does not belong to foreigners, but we don't say that all foreigners should pack up and go. They can stay as traders, and work with us not us masters and rulers.....

These were the parameters to undo decades of colonial indoctrination. But the challenge for Nkrumah would be to wake-up Ghanaians into action while not also awakening colonial violence. To achieve this he added:

The age of politics of words is gone. This is the age of politics of action. We don't have *guns*. We don't have ammunition to fight anybody. We have a great spirit, a great national soul which is manifest in our *unity*.....
Wherefore my advice is "Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all things will be added unto you" (Nimako *ibid*: 45).

We have emphasised the words *guns* and *unity* because colonial rule rested on violence and on divide and rule tactics. In plain language what he meant by *seek ye first the political kingdom, and all things will be added unto you* was that the economic development of Ghana required Ghanaian agency, and in the colonial context it meant self-determination and political independence.

Some years later, after failing to suppress the nationalist to territorial sovereignty claims, when handing over sovereignty to the elected leader for independent Ghana on 6 March 1957, the British Governor in Ghana, Sir Arden-Clarke, made among others, the following statement:

Nkrumah and his party had the mass of the people behind them and there was *no other party with appreciable public support to which one could turn*. Without Nkrumah, the Constitution would be stillborn and if nothing came of all the hopes, aspirations and concrete proposals for a greater measure of self-government, there would no longer be any faith in the good intentions of the British Government and the Gold Coast [i.e. Ghana] would be plunged into disorders, violence and bloodshed (Emphasis added; quoted in Nimako 1991: 79)

This statement is included to highlight one of the under-theorized issues in political conflict in Africa and Asia, namely, the relation between nationalism, nationalist movements and political parties. As a result of the pattern of mobilization, Ghana had become a de facto one-party state upon the achievement of political independence. The Communist Party of China emerged victorious in the civil war and has been in power since; the Congress Party of India also ruled without interruption for nearly fifty years; we can add developments in Algeria, Tanzania, South Africa and Zimbabwe to these political cultures (Chikane 2012).

Nationalist leaders do not just mobilize to reclaim territorial sovereignty; they also envision a new state and society after the end of colonial rule and once in power, they act upon this vision (Sian 2014). These new visions found their expression in the design of new national flags to replace colonial flags, national anthems, new names for the country, new development plans for the future society and new political alliances for international relations. Independence struggles in Asia and Africa became mutually reinforcing. Thus before African countries gained their independence India had already put the issue of Apartheid in South Africa on the agenda in the UN. The newly independent Asian and African countries supported China to claim the UN Security Council seat in 1971.

Several efforts were made to consolidate political independence within Asia and Africa. Some of these found their expression in conferences such as the Asian People's Conference in New Delhi in 1947; the Asian-African Conference, also known as the Bandung Conference, in Indonesia (1955) organized by Indonesia in collaboration with Burma, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India; and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) in 1958 (Bhasin 2007). The Bandung Conference culminated in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961. According to Nkrumah, Pan-Africanism moved to Africa, its true home, when Ghana achieved political independence; the First Conference of Independent African States in Accra in April 1958, and the All-African Peoples' Conference in December the same year in Accra.

These initiatives gave birth to the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU) (Nimako 2010).

Not only did African countries become independent within the UN and Pan-African frame but also Nkrumah changed the colonial name of Gold Coast to Ghana. Haiti first began the process of adopting a new name for the liberated country in 1804 when it dropped its colonial name San Dominique. After Nkrumah, by accident or design, many other African countries followed this tradition when they too became independent. Among them are: Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana, Namibia and Burkina Faso (Nimako 2014).

The new reality of decolonization led the then British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, to note that:

The wind of change is blowing through the [African] continent, and, whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as fact, and our national policies must take account of it (Speech made to the South Africa Parliament on 3 February 1960).

The statement above was first made in Ghana but gained international attention when it was repeated two months later in South Africa; it was a call for adaptation of policy to the new reality. Where colonial policies did not provide the space for mass mobilization armed struggle was applied. This became the lot of territories like Algeria, Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, South Africa, South West Africa, Zimbabwe and Vietnam; and those countries received moral, political and material support from independent states in Africa and Asia within the NAM/OAU as well as the UN frame.

Every revolution has its counter-revolution; and counter-revolution found its expression in neo-colonialism, which in turn is an extension of defensive imperialism. According to Nkrumah the state that is subjected to neo-colonialism is in theory independent and has all the trappings of international sovereignty, but in reality its economy system and political policy are directed by states external to it. I have argued elsewhere that neo-colonialism has three elements, namely, *trade, military force and corruption* (Nimako 2011).

On the one hand, as noted above the United States emerged as the dominant force within the UN system, the US leadership did not find it feasible to, or could not, control the new world order alone and thus turned to its ethnic cousins in Europe to re-configure the Euro-American alliance that has existed since the sixteenth century. The new world order was now led by the US with (West) Europe as junior partner and everyone else as real or potential enemy; this found its expression in multilateral institutions like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF); this became the structural context in which Asian and African peoples reclaimed their sovereignties. Thus from China to Africa, trade regimes have been devised [by a Western alliance] to cripple

economies via outright economic sanctions or unfair trade practices (Subramania 2011).

On the other hand, recall that corruption was been part and parcel of the colonial enterprise from the moment it began. These have at times been recorded in textbooks as divide and rule policy; but this strategy did not end with decolonization; it took new forms. In other words, as part of defensive imperialism, the colonial powers found ways to maintain control by inserting themselves in local politics through the support to various political factions. Thus two decades after Indonesia and Ghana led the way in the decolonization project respectively in Asia and Africa, the governments of Sukarno in Indonesia and Nkrumah in Ghana were overthrown in military coups with tacit support by the former colonizers. But the institutions that both Sukarno and Nkrumah played critical roles in bringing about, such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Organization of the African Unity (OAU) survived and continued to support decolonization and economic development of their societies.

Recall that trade unions, political parties and citizenship hardly existed in the colonies at the heydays of colonialism; and the newly independent countries had difficulty in making citizens out of colonial subjects. As political independence approached political parties mushroomed and some of the ambitious local colonial students like Dr. K.A. Busia, a British trained anthropologist and first Ghanaian professor of sociology emerged as politicians. The political parties Dr. Busia affiliated to lost three general elections (in 1951, 1954 and 1956) prior to the independence of Ghana; but he ended up as leader of the opposition parties in the parliament. Besides he refused to accept his defeat and appeared honest enough to tell us something about his trajectory to politics. Not only did Busia advocate against the granting of independence to Ghana by the British, he also called on the United States government to 'impose economic sanctions' against Ghana in order to bring down the Nkrumah regime. After wandering through Europe for support in vain, Busia found people to listen to him in the United States; and on 3 December 1962 Busia appeared before a Congressional Committee to plead for the overthrow of Nkrumah. Senator Tom Dodd led off by stating that Ghana had become 'the mortal enemy of true freedom and independence for the peoples of Africa and the mortal enemy of African peace'. Dr. Busia responded by saying 'that politics isn't [his] career, but what made [him] go into politics is the fact that [he] saw right at the beginning, as far back as Nkrumah's return [to Ghana in 1947],.... That we had there all the makings, all the ingredients of revolutionary communism' (Nimako 1991: 91)

The political irony about people like Busia is that they were educated to support the colonial regime but they were discriminated against and could not explore their professions and talents fully under colonial regime; but they became defendants of colonialism after the end of colonialism. Apparently those who did not stick their neck in the anti-colonial struggle wanted to enjoy the fruits of political independence. Thus as nationalist movements emerged to oppose colonialism, other groups emerged to oppose nationalist movements.

As if that was not enough, six months after the official launch of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, the British Ambassador to Ethiopia, J.W. Russel, filed the following report to his government on 31 December 1963:

Nkrumah's 'political kingdom' seems irreconcilable with the independence, prosperity or unity of others. How then is this lethal rogue to be contained? Would it not be more logical, and in every way more profitable, to align ourselves according to our interests and our principles? The proposition seems to me a simple one. Nkrumah is our enemy, he is determined to complete our expulsion from an Africa which he aspires to dominate absolutely (quoted in New African Magazine, 3 May 2013).

In conclusion, the formation of the OAU/AU has created a framework for Africa within the Non-Aligned Movement and between African and Asian states. As I write Africa-Asia political and economic relation is symbolized by Africa-China relation (Nimako 2007). As a gesture of solidarity China built African Union Headquarters; and by accident or design China took the initiative and placed Nkrumah's statue in front of the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2012. Recall that the initiator of OAU, Kwame Nkrumah, was overthrown in February 1966 while in China on his way to Vietnam. The gesture for the Chinese to place his statue in front of the AU building demonstrates that the Chinese government has memory; and the memory of colonial humiliation remains an important force in Africa-Asia political and economic relations now.

Concluding Remarks

During the past 200 years African and Asian societies and countries have lost their sovereignty to European nations in the process of colonization and they regained their sovereignties, albeit in modified form, in the process of decolonization, also referred to as national liberation. In other words the colonization of Asia and Africa by European states were preceded by and overlapped with the colonization of the Americas. But with regard to Asia and Africa the European states did bite off more than they could chew; the continuous resistance to the European colonial enterprise and domination by peoples of Africa and Asia gave rise to decolonization and continues to this day. Neo-colonialism is the half way stage between colonialism and envisaged political independence.

Colonization took place in phases, as did de-colonization. With regard to colonization Chartered Companies were formed with the capacity to make dubious treaties with local rulers and form armies on behalf of their states; when the chartered companies became less profitable and faced challenges to their trade and armies European states stepped in to control the territories. This process took place within the colonial logic of 'when persuasion fails force must apply' and constitutes offensive imperialism. Decolonization also took place in phases, namely, the formation of a nationalist movements, and achievement of political independence.

These two processes of lost and found sovereignties are the major driving forces in state formation and global political economy.

More importantly the re-orientation of the world economy to the Orient is not a result of any innate quality of Asians; rather it is challenging the false Eurocentric historical narrative that has been forced through down throats as a result European colonial enterprise. Asia is the largest continent and has the largest population in the world; they are getting their due because they have regained their sovereignties and their rise is reconnecting Afro-Eurasia and beyond.

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